1:Srinivas E-5 (1940-42)1952 AW5 Coorg AW5

mortar, with solid, carved woodwork. Masons and carpenters from Malabar build them, and Coorg ancestral houses consequently resemble greatly the houses of well-to-do Nāyars. The house is usually situated on an elevation, and a narrow, high-walled and winding lane (*ōṇi*) leads up to it. From the windows in the upper story one usually obtains a fine view of the surrounding country. Formerly, in the days when feuds, or *kuḍupi* (*kuḍippaka* in Malayāḷam), between joint families were common, and a surprise raid (*kaḷḷa paḍé*) from a hostile *okka* was always a possibility, anyone coming with unfriendly intentions exposed himself to view from the windows of the ancestral house. The house was built like a fortress and was able to stand a siege for several days.

The ancestral estate usually includes an extent of jungle, some grazing land, and valleys in which rice is grown. The jungle provided the household with the necessary timber and fuel. A part of the jungle is reserved for burying or cremating the dead members of the *okka*. There is a kitchen-garden near the main building. A well or pond provides water for domestic purposes.

Every house includes an ancestor-shrine or ancestor-platform. Uncarved stones, representing cobra-deities, are planted on platforms built around the trunk of a milk-exuding tree. There may also be other uncarved stones representing minor deities like Pūda and Guḷika.

According to Lewis Rice,[1] in the seventies of the last century the Coorg *okka* frequently consisted of twenty or thirty, and occasionally even fifty members, all residing under one roof. He further tells us that previous to the invasion of Coorg by Tippu Sultan in the latter half of the eighteenth century, it was not uncommon to find in a house thirty or forty adult male relatives living together. Many *okkas* seem to have had 120 to 150 people, all living in the ancestral house.

Nowadays the *okka* commonly consists of two or three generations of agnatically-related males, their wives, and their children. Girls born in the *okka* go out on marriage as residence is patrilocal, but it sometimes happens that a woman remains unmarried for a variety of reasons. In such a case she stays in her natal *okka*. An *okka* also includes the widow of a deceased member. As mentioned earlier, leviratic unions are preferred amongst Coorgs, and a widow

[1] *Mysore and Coorg*, Bangalore, 1878, vol. iii, p. 329.

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Individual responsibility was not entirely ignored, however. An old usage lays down the maximum fine that could be levied on a guilty man[1] (as distinct from the *okka* of which he was a member) as nine annas and three *bhaṭṭis* of paddy. Again, when a person was guilty of a grave offence even his *okka* joined with his caste in excommunicating him.

XI

The institution of family friendship (*aruvāmé*) was formerly far more important among Coorgs than it is today. In a Coorg village houses are scattered over a wide area, and a Coorg's nearest Coorg or other high-caste neighbour is usually several hundred yards away on the other side of a hill or valley. Formerly, the jungle was heavier and there were no good roads, and these increased the difficulties of communication between neighbours. Besides, feuds were common, and hostile raids from unfriendly villages or *nāḍs* were always a possibility. A Coorg sometimes had to get up in the middle of the night to fight for his life.

Under the circumstances it is easy to see the need for socially stressing the tie of neighbourhood. Two *okkas* usually, though not always, stood in the relation of family friendship to each other, and were frequently related by marriage. The tie of family friendship was a traditional one, so that two *okkas* found that they had inherited this relationship. In the marriage rites, the *aruva*, or head of the friendly *okka*, is asked whether he is the traditional *aruva* or the *aruva* hired with gold for the occasion. The traditional family friend, it is hardly necessary to add, commanded much more respect than the family friend 'hired' for the occasion.

The relationship of family friendship was between two *okkas* and not between two individuals. The headman of the *okka* and his wife were certainly more important than the other members in this relationship, but this was in virtue of the positions they occupied in the *okka*.

At a wedding or death in an *okka* the members of the 'friendly' *okka* had certain duties, duties which are even now performed. The headman of the 'friendly' *okka* is the master of ceremonies on ritual occasions. The younger members of his *okka* and womenfolk

[1] It is likely that the fine was paid out of the private funds of the guilty man, and that where he had none, his *okka* came to his rescue.

1:Srinivas_E-5 (1940-42)1952 AW5 Coorg AW5

634 While groups wider than the *nāḍ* are shadowy, the same cannot be said of the *sīmé*-headmen, who are higher than *nāḍ*-headmen. There are eight *sīmé*-headmen in Coorg Proper, and they are usually mentioned in pairs. Each pair of *sīmé*-headmen comes from the same *nāḍ*: Kaḷḷangala and Boḷḷera from Tāvaḷagērimūrnāḍ, Mātanḍa and Buḍuvanḍa from Beppunāḍ, Pāṇḍira and Paradanḍa from Nālknāḍ, and finally, Pōreyanḍa and Paruvanḍa from Tāvunāḍ.

596 Feuds between *okkas* seem to have continued well into the latter
628 half of the last century. In 1870 Ritcher wrote: 'It may still happen,
634 that the head of a Coorg house on his dying bed will solemnly charge his sons to seek vengeance on his personal enemies, a bequest which occasions calamitous feuds between succeeding generations.'[1] A feud between *okkas* was called *kuḍupi*, while a feud between villages or between *nāḍs* was called *maradalé*. It is likely that feuds between *okkas* in the same village were extremely rare as the village was too compact a unit to permit of feuds within it. But the same cannot be said of villages within the same *nāḍ*. The annual dance, at the harvest festival, for all the villages of Ballatnāḍ, is nowadays attended only by Pērūr, and this is attributed to the former prevalence of feuds between the various villages composing this *nāḍ*.

628 Formerly feuds between *nāḍs* were very common, and folklore
634 bears ample testimony to this fact. There was a long feud between
539 Bēngunāḍ and Ballatnāḍ in the course of which they conducted raids on each other. A hero called Appaṇṇa, who later came to be famous as Kappaṇṇa or 'robber', was born in Ballatnāḍ, and when he was born all the people of Bēngunāḍ suffered from headache. Later he raided the Povvedi temple in Bēngūr, and robbed it of the two wooden pins (*kīlu*) with which the temple's see-saw (*rāṭé*) was fixed to two wooden posts. Pilgrims used to sit on the see-saw at the periodical festival of Povvedi of Bēngūr.

The robbing of the wooden pins belonging to the Bēngūr Povvedi temple was a triumph for Balmāvṭi. The latter had a see-saw made and used it at the biennial festival of the Povvedi of Balmāvṭi. At the beginning of the festival of Povvedi of Balmāvṭi there is a rite at which a festival-priest enumerates the restrictions which have to be observed during the festival period, and one of these restrictions states that no one from Bēngūr may approach

[1] *Manual of Coorg*, p. 126.

1:Srinivas E-5 (1940-42)1952 AW5 Coorg AW5

the sacred see-saw. Several years ago my friend Shri Paṭṭamāḍa Ponnappa of Bēngūr was asked, during the bienniel festival, not to touch the see-saw.

The entire atmosphere of Coorg folklore is martial: secret raids, fights, heroes, and intrigues are the stuff out of which a folksong is made. The bards delight when a hero is born in their *nāḍ*. They describe the event with gusto. There is a storm, the earth trembles, and the men in the hostile *nāḍ* suffer from headache. On the other hand, the bards wail with self-pity when their *nāḍ* suffers a defeat in a fight. The men of the *nāḍ* go on pilgrimage to their patron-deity and pray to him for the birth of a hero in their midst.

In a fight between two *nāḍs*, the temples belonging to either side were commonly attacked. In fact, a temple constituted the most sensitive part of a *nāḍ*. The prevention of the offer of worship to the deity of another *nāḍ* inflicted a very deep humiliation on the latter; and the stealing of the property of the temple of another *nāḍ* was as bad. In a struggle between two *nāḍs* which centred round their temples, the deity of the triumphant *nāḍ* was regarded as having triumphed over the deity of the defeated *nāḍ*. A devotee of the deity of a *nāḍ* was also a patriot of that *nāḍ*. He had to take up arms to ensure the continuance of the offer of worship at the temple of his *nāḍ* or village, and to see that raiders did not succeed in carrying away the property of the temple.

Patriotism for one's *nāḍ* was widespread and deep, and even women and children were imbued with it. Women were in an unfortunate position as they were torn between their love for their natal *nāḍ* and their duty towards their conjugal *nāḍ*. There are instances of women working for their natal *nāḍ* against their conjugal *nāḍ* when the two were at feud with each other.

The widespread prevalence of feuds did have one important structural consequence. They very effectively counteracted the tendency of caste to stress the horizontal ties at the expense of the vertical ties. But with the conquest of Coorg by the Lingāyaṭ Rājas and the decrease of feuds, the horizontal emphasis of caste increased. Thus wider political integration strengthened caste.

I:Srinivas E-5 (1940-42)1952 AW5 Coorg AW5

several temples: one dedicated to Bhagavati, another to Mahādēva, two to Ayyappa, and six to Raktēshwari (identified with Chamuṇḍi). The temples dedicated to Bhagavati, Mahādēva, and Ayyappa have Brahmin priests who worship the deities by using Sanskrit *mantras*, whereas those dedicated to Raktēshwari do not have Brahmin priests, and pigs are sacrificed annually to her. There are two modes of worship, the Sanskritic and non-Sanskritic, and in the festival of a village-deity these two modes are found mixed in varying proportions.

Usually there is more than one temple in a village, and a temple contains more than one deity. The temples in a village might be either Sanskritic or non-Sanskritic, or might represent varying degrees of compromise between the two elements. Finally, a village-deity might also be the deity of more than one village.

The festival of a village-deity requires a certain amount of co-operation between the various temples in a village, and not infrequently between villages. For instance, the festivals of the various deities in a village are so arranged that they do not clash if not actually dovetail. The festivals of the deities Kētrappa and Chaunḍi in Bēngūr occur at the same time, but they dovetail remarkably considering the elaborateness of the ritual that is performed. A kind of offering known as *térémuḍi* (usually a man wearing *téré* equipment) is sent by both the Bhagavati (in common parlance, Povvedi) and Chaunḍi temples to the Kētrappa temple on the eighteenth day (which is also called the *nammé* or 'festival day') of the biennial Kētrappa festival.

A few miles from Bēngūr is Balmāvṭi, which has an important temple dedicated to Bhagavati (Povvedi). This deity also has a very elaborate biennial festival, similar to Kētrappa's, but the interesting point is that the two festivals are performed in alternate years. When the 'big festival' of Kētrappa is being performed, Bhagavati of Balmāvṭi has a 'small festival', and vice versa. That is to say, this arrangement implies some co-operation between Begunāḍ and Ballatnāḍ. This is all the more surprising as formerly there was a feud (*maradalé*) between these two *nāḍs*, and this feud seems to have been a long and bitter one.

There is another type of co-operation to which reference must be made here. The Baṇṇas and Maléyas who officiate as oracles and dancers (wearing *téré*) at the festival of Kētrappa come from the villages Saṇṇa Pulikōṭu and Balmāvti respectively. The services of

1:Srinivas E-5 (1940-42)1952 AW5 Coorg AW5

621 are checked sufficiently to prevent their overflowing the village, and that unity with other castes occupying different positions in the hierarchy is stressed. This was easier in the past because the hierarchy was tacitly accepted by the people, and low castes like Mēdas and Poleyas did not object to participating with the other castes in the village at a lower level, or even being completely excluded on certain ritual occasions. Again the widespread prevalence of feuds between villages and between *nāḍs* tended to emphasize the unity of the village and check the segmentary action of caste.

796 621 784 At the *tappaḍaka* ritual, the members of the village or *nāḍ* celebrating the festival of the local village-deity undertake to observe certain dietetic and other restrictions while the festival lasts. The villagers may not kill an animal or break an egg or coconut for the table; and toddy may not be tapped within the village. Villagers who want to consume these articles have to import them from outside. The festival-priests, who are more important than ordinary villagers, may not consume even imported meat and toddy. They have to observe strict vegetarianism and teetotalism. They are also required to observe strict continence and avoid touching laymen.

796 784 In the Kētrappa festival, women in their periods are required to leave the village and return to it only after the festival is over. Such a woman is in a condition of pollution; and her presence in the village is regarded as inconsistent with the ritual status of the village. People in a condition of birth- or death-pollution are also not allowed to participate in the festival.

No marriage may be performed during the festival. If a person dies in the village he has to be buried quietly, without the customary firing of guns and band.

These restrictions serve to show that the village (or *nāḍ*) is the concerned entity in the festival. The restrictions increase as concern increases—the festival-priests have to observe more restrictions than the laymen. The village (or *nāḍ*) observing the festival is marked off from other villages by these restrictions. Every villager knows that failure by any one of them to observe the restrictions might result in some misfortune to the entire village. The unity of the village is projected to the 'mystical' plane and is supported by ritual sanctions.

A brief account of a part of the ritual of enumeration of restric-

1:Srinivas E-5 (1940-42)1952 AW5 Coorg AW5

796 688 misdemeanour during the festival. Again, the latter may be regarded as more secular than the former: at the festivals of the village-deities the members of the village take a vow in the name of god to keep the rules and restrictions, whereas at the harvest festival no such vow is taken.

796 [535] At the end of the harvest festival there is a village dance (*ūr kōlu*) in which all the adult males in the village have to take part; and on the following day, or two days later, there is a dance for the entire *nāḍ* to which every village belonging to the particular *nāḍ* sends its representatives. Each village makes a special point of sending its best dancers to the *nāḍ* dance.

[224] The village dance is followed by a collective hunt by the villagers. (A collective hunt may also be organized by a *nāḍ*.) Every adult male in the village is required to be present at the hunt, and a successful hunt implies a co-ordination of the activities of numerous individuals. Lack of proper co-ordination has to be paid for with life or limb.

[527] The festivals of village-deities, the harvest festival, and the festival of arms all terminate with a dinner for the entire village (or *nāḍ*). The boar that is killed in the collective hunt is cooked on this occasion. If the game is not enough to go round, then one or two domesticated pigs or goats are slaughtered in addition. Each house brings its own cooked rice-flour to the dinner. The headman selects five men to serve food to the men.

The men bring halves of coconut shells or leaf-cups for liquor: a young man is given only one cup of liquor while an elder is entitled to more. The singers get an extra share of meat and liquor. The Poleyas do not sit with the rest, but are given a quantity of meat and liquor which they consume by themselves.

[521] Both the village dance and the village hunt stress the unity of the village. In the case of the village hunt, there is the additional element of the threat of danger from the boar or tiger or other wild animal. The village dinner is rightly called *ūrormé* or 'village harmony', as it maintains and increases the harmony of the village.

IX

634 ●628 Like the village and *okka*, the *nāḍ* is a real social unit and not a mere administrative division imposed from above by the Rājas. In fact, before the political integration of Coorg by the Rājas, the maximum political unit seems to have been a union of two or three

1:Srinivas E-5 (1940-42)1952 AW5 Coorg AW5

nāḍs under a chief called Nāyaka, who was usually at feud with other similar chiefs. For some time even after the country had been effectively brought under the control of the Lingāyaṭs Rājas, feuds between *nāḍs* continued to occur.

The play of Kungu which is enacted in the south-western parts of Coorg during the harvest festival gives us a picture of Coorg in the days when inter-*nāḍ* feuds were common. *Maradalé* (feud) was prevalent between Beppunāḍ and Kadiyetnāḍ, and it was so bitter that there was no intermarriage between them. They conducted raids on each other constantly. In one of these raids an arrow from a Beppunāḍ man lodged itself in the body of a Kaḍiyetnāḍ man. The injured fighter was carried by his friends to Chendappaṇḍa Kungu, a famous doctor in Eḍenālknāḍ. Kungu agreed to treat the injured man because Eḍenālknāḍ and Kaḍiyetnāḍ were friendly to each other. But Kungu's mother was born in Beppunāḍ and she persuaded her son to neglect the injured man, who belonged to a *nāḍ* which was the traditional enemy of her natal *nāḍ*. The injured man died as a result of Kungu's neglect.

It was common for deities to be identified with their *nāḍs*. Temples were always chosen for attack. The story of Chengeṭṭira Appaṇṇa stealing the wooden pins belonging to the see-saw of the Bēngūr Povvedi temple has already been narrated. The most successful way of rousing the wrath of a *nāḍ* or village was by attacking one of its temples.

A patriot was also a devotee. The story of Kaiyandira Appayya brings out this point clearly. Appayya, a mere boy, whose ear-boring *mangala* had not yet been performed, was cut to the quick when he learnt that the well-known fighter, Kullachenḍa Chōndu, had tried to prevent the offer of worship at the temple of Chōli Povvedi in Arapaṭ village in Kaḍiyetnāḍ. Appayya persuaded the elders of Kaḍiyetnāḍ to permit him to fight Chōndu, whom he killed by resorting to unfair means. Appayya's action, instead of meeting with disapproval, earned him great rewards. *Mangala* ceremony was performed for him, and a number of privileges were conferred on him by a grateful *nāḍ*. These privileges later became hereditary in the Kaiyandira *okka*.

When a hero was born in a hostile *nāḍ*, all the people in the *nāḍ* suffered from headache. The tower of its most important temple was damaged, guns hanging from the roof fired of their own accord, babies sleeping in cradles suddenly woke up, frightened, and so on.

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

643 ago were, by the Head-Sheristadar Nanchappa, received as
648 Coorgs, but after his death were expelled from the clan by
174 the rest of the Coorg people. The settlement of the dispute
177 will perhaps be only a matter of time, but not of intrinsic
[578] caste spirit which as such is inconsistent with the notorious
[564] Coorg practice of assimilating cognate tribes into one clan, and with the fact, that during the Seringapatam captivity of thousands of Coorg families by Tippu Sultan, most of them were forcibly made Mussulmans and, though on the return to their country, they abjured Islam, the very process of circumcision deprived them of their previous caste—in a brahminical sense—and rendered that of their descendents defective. The renown of the Coorgs lies certainly not in the purity and antiquity of their genealogy, but in the union and strength of so many discordant elements into one compact body or clan, that bravely fought on every occasion of danger for the honour and safety of their adopted country, whether under the leadership of their own Náyakas or their alien Rájahs, and there can be no doubt that they would in time of need, with equal loyalty rally round the standard of their English Rulers!

619 To the question, how such a conglomerate of divers tribes
186 could have been formed into an almost homogenous body,
175 I would reply, that what might perhaps have been impossible
[628] amongst a civilized and politically powerful state, was a com-
[648] paratively easy process in a small uncivilized and secluded hill-country, which, seldom influenced by the politics of its more powerful neighbours, and in blissful ignorance undisturbed by subtle religious disputes, vented its savage strength in intestine feuds, till the despotic hand of the alien usurper subjected the turbulent chiefs, and united them and their adherents in deadly combat against common foes or for marauding expeditions. Their defeats as well as their achievements originated and strengthened national sympathies which time matured into a healthy spirit of clanship, that asserted

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

695 caused to interchange Farigh khati and a Rázináma shall be
671 taken from them.
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74. Whenever a case is investigated by a Panchâyat, and an award is passed, if one of the parties refused to abide by it, he shall be asked to explain the reason and if he has reason to suppose, that undue means have been used to bias the Panchâyat or that the decision was partial, he shall be required to produce evidence to that effect and give a written obligation, binding himself to pay such penalty as the Sirkar may be pleased to direct, in the event of his assertions proving false. If this circumstance happens at the Kacheri of a Párapatiagár, he shall forward the proceedings together with the witnesses to prove the corruption of the Panchâyat to the Subadár, and if it should happen at the Kacheri of the latter, the Subadár shall send them to the Daryáft-Kacheri.

75. But in cases where the party, refusing to abide by the decision of the Panchâyat fails to bring forward witnesses to prove his allegation, the award shall be carried into effect.

628 76. In cases where a suit is preferred against an in-
671 dividual who is not subject to the jurisdiction of either the
177 Párapatiagár or the Subadár of the nád or taluq, where the
694 complainant is residing, the Párapatiagár or Subadár shall request by a letter the officer in authority at the place, where the defendant may be residing, to send him in order to answer the complaint, preferred against him. The same rule is applicable to cases where witnesses may be residing within another jurisdiction.

648 77. In cases where either the defendant or witnesses
671 may be residing in another country, the district-servants are
177 to report the circumstance to the Huzur, which will take
694 measures by writing to the European Officer in authority at that place, either to cause the personal attendance of such defendant or witnesses or to obtain their defence or evidence respectively in writing as may seem to him advisable.

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

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Police.

41. The police of the taluqs is to be considered under the charge of the Subadárs, and subordinately to them, of the Párapatiagárs and Patéls.

42. The district functionaries are to give at all times their utmost care and attention to prevent disturbances, assaults, and all other acts in breach of the peace; they are to apprehend and send to the Daryáft-Kacheri any person who may be accused of having committed robbery or violence.

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43. The Patéls of the village and the villagers shall conjointly protect their villages from depredations of robbers. They shall always be on their guard and act with vigilance, so that no thefts or personal assaults may be committed.

45. If any person of a suspicious character makes his appearance in a village, the Patél shall make an enquiry about his name, place of residence and the purpose for which he has come to the village; and if the Patél be not satisfied with his answer, he shall send him to the Párapatiagár.

46. If any person in the village behaves improperly, the Patél shall persuade him to correct his conduct and give him the admonitions that may seem necessary.

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47. If any theft or robbery be committed, the Patél and the villagers shall exert themselves to apprehend the robbers. If the robbers be found in the act of robbing and if they escape, they shall be pursued and seized. The Patéls of the neighbouring villages shall co-operate in ensuring the seizure of the robbers. But if the Patéls or others do not use their endeavours either to discover or apprehend the robbers, and if the Sirkar shall have reason to believe that the robbery was committed through the negligence of the Patéls, they will incur the displeasure of the Sirkar and be punished accordingly.

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48. Whenever information is lodged of a person having